

# Activities at Petrified Forest National Park



Thunderstorm over the Long Logs during the monsoon season of late summer.

## Points of Interest and Facilities

*In order as seen from north to south*

**Painted Desert Visitor Center** provides information, book sales, exhibits, and restrooms. A free orientation film is shown every half hour. A restaurant, gift shop, gas station, and convenience store are adjacent to the visitor center.

**Tiponi, Tawa, Kachina, Chinde, Pintado, Nizhoni, Whipple, And Lacey Points** are overlooks providing panoramic views of the Painted Desert.

**Painted Desert Inn National Historic Landmark**, located at **Kachina Point**, once served as a respite for travelers along historic Route 66. From the inn, you may view distant vistas and exhibits while touring this historic building.

**Puerco Pueblo**, a large archeological site, was occupied over 600 years ago. The pueblo has been partially excavated and a few of the room foundations stabilized.

**Newspaper Rock** has more than 650 petroglyphs adorning boulders that tumbled to rest below the cliffs. Due to defacement of these petroglyphs and unstable hillsides, the area is closed below the cliff. Free spotting scopes are available at the viewpoint.

**Blue Mesa** is an ideal setting to see the effect of erosion on badland hills. The one-way spur road leads to the mesa top, a four-mile round trip from the main park road.

**Jasper Forest** showcases bluffs which once encased the petrified wood now strewn across the valley floor.

**Crystal Forest, Long Logs, Agate House, and Giant Logs** are all trails that feature the many wonders of Petrified Forest. Refer to the Trails section for more information.

**Rainbow Forest Museum** provides exhibits of petrified wood, fossils, and displays of prehistoric animals as well as information, book sales, and restrooms. A free orientation film is shown every half hour. A gift shop and a seasonal snack bar are located nearby.



Ranger guided program at Giant Logs  
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## Ranger Guided Programs

Ranger programs are available throughout the year. You probably won’t be surprised that there are more programs available during our busy summer. There are three main programs:

**Triassic Park:** Discover the landscape of long ago and learn about the Late Triassic Epoch. Meet in the Rainbow Forest Museum sunroom. This will be either an easy Ranger-guided walk (with a few stairs) or a talk, depending on weather and interest.

**Painted Desert Inn National Historic Landmark:** Step back in time to learn about the inn’s captivating history and architecture. Meet at the Painted Desert Inn National Historic Landmark for this easy Ranger-guided tour.

**Puerco Pueblo:** Explore this ancestral Puebloan village and discover petroglyphs along the trail. Meet at the Puerco Pueblo parking lot trailhead for this easy Ranger-guided walk.

Additional programs, activities, and events occur throughout the year. Call 928-524-6228 for more information, check at one of the visitor facilities when you come to the park, or visit <http://www.nps.gov/pefo>.



Exploring Petrified Forest

## A Timeless Treasure Trove

Imagine a place that protects pieces of natural and cultural history, from artifacts centuries old to fossils millions of years old. This place is the Petrified Forest National Park Museum Collection. More than 200,000 objects are housed in the collection, including archeological objects systematically recovered from hundreds of sites within the park’s boundaries and associated field records; ethnological objects related to Hopi and Navajo cultures; Triassic invertebrate and vertebrate fossils; Park Photographic Archive; representative geological specimens collected from the park; and the biological collection (both plants and animals). The collection provides a window of discovery into the Late Triassic Epoch of our world’s natural history—its flora, fauna, and geology, as well as millennia of human use and occupation, and the current natural environment—an aid to understanding and education among researchers, park staff, and park visitors. Explore some of the objects in the collection at the Rainbow Forest Museum and at <http://www.museum.nps.gov/pefo/page.htm>.



Petrified bark—a very rare specimen in the collection

## What’s Over There?

Paula wanted to find a quiet spot all her own to meditate. She saw the perfect place. It was just a dozen yards off-trail to the top of a sandstone outcrop, and she could take a picture with that really long petrified log in the foreground. Brian saw footprints an hour later, after Paula had gone, and wondered what there was to see from that vantage point. Kim did the same. By noon, 30 people had followed in Paula’s footsteps. By the next day, over a hundred. The trail Paula accidentally cleared divided in half a large patch of microbiotic soil, a living crust that protects the precious topsoil. She had carved an eight-lane freeway through that miniature world and opened it to erosion. The nutrients and moisture retention of that delicate system was gone and the animals and plants that depended on it would suffer. Paula’s meditation spot became a place of quiet destruction.

We each have made an effort to come and experience this place. It also takes the effort of every visitor to protect it. “Taking only pictures, leaving only footprints” is not enough in this landscape. Where there is a designated trail, regulations require that you leave your footprints only on the trail. In the Wilderness Areas, watch where you step and follow washes when possible. Together we can protect this fragile and fascinating region.